

Good morning, Human Services Committee,

Thank you for listening to our testimonies and giving us your time. I'm in favor HB6616: An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status. I am an active member of Nosotras CT in Norwalk and this is my testimony.

I am 44 years old and have lived in the United States for 25 years, paying taxes. In 2019 I lived through my worst nightmare. It all started when I discovered bumps around my neck and in my armpits. I applied for financial assistance at the community clinic in Norwalk, they gave it to me and I went to my first appointment, and they sent me to Norwalk Hospital because they didn't know what was causing this sickness in my body.

I went to the hospital and they quickly gave me a date for surgery. The day of my surgery arrived, and as I was coming out of it, the only thing the doctor told me was "I'm sorry, your bumps are chronic. We've removed them for now, but they will come back. There is a medication for it, but you can't pay for it because it's very expensive." When I left the hospital, I was experiencing a lot of pain and a burning sensation that wouldn't let me sleep. It was intolerable, but I still went to work. A few days passed and the wounds opened, the burning was so intense that I couldn't even sleep. I went back to the clinic and they told me to go to the hospital. I went to the hospital and they sent me to the clinic. It was like a game of pingpong, no one was paying attention to me.

I suffered for 8 long months, spending long nights in the shower. My wife was the only one who tried to comfort me and look for solutions. The pain was intolerable. I could no longer perform at work, I had to change the gauze every hour because the wounds were still oozing. I think a secretary from the clinic felt sorry for me and she recommended that I go to Yale New Haven Hospital. It was almost a year later and the first thing the doctor said to me was "Who did this to you?" They gave me tests and diagnosed me with diabetes. The wounds had gotten infected. They treated me, but in 2023 the wounds are still causing me problems. I can't move my neck to either side, I can't raise my arms, the skin healed gradually and stuck together the wrong way. This is why I'm giving my testimony: because I believe I was treated worse than an animal. I'm a father of 5 children, and all of this led us to be evicted because I didn't get timely and dignified healthcare. Many do not believe the magnitude of what I have suffered, so I am attaching photos below. Please support HB6616.

